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CLUB STABLES

ARMY AND NAVY NEWS**NAVY OFFICERS ARE
PREPARING FOR TEST**

Army, navy and marine officers are making preparations for their physical tests to be undertaken between now and December 22, the army officers to start on a horseback ride of ninety miles on December 20, while some of the naval officers will take the walking test. Paymaster Hornberger and Doctor Lane of the naval station will commence their walking test next Thursday and will travel twenty miles the first day, twenty-three the next and seven the next. The paymaster has been doing some walking of late and for a while it was thought he was training to enter the big walking race of next Sunday, but the paymaster is a long distance, not a short distance walker. Doctor Langhorne may take his test next Monday.

Chance for College Graduates.

Notice has been sent to the heads of leading educational institutions in the country that a competitive examination will be held in Washington, beginning January 3, of candidates for appointment as assistant paymasters of the Navy. Each institution is invited to name one of its graduates or senior students to enter the examination. It is expected that there will be three vacancies in the navy pay corps by the date of the examination, with more in prospect.

Instruction of Officers.

A general order to the Army prepared by direction of the secretary of war requires that all captains and lieutenants of cavalry, field and coast artillery and infantry, of between three and eighteen years of commissioned service, who have not completed satisfactorily the garrison school course in the subjects of drill regulations, small arms firing regulations, military law and international law, shall attend and pursue a special course of instruction in those subjects.

An Artillery Salute.

Naval salutes are interesting to landmen as well as to Jack Tars. The artillery salute is the survival of one of these ceremonial practices which formerly had some definite meaning and is meant to signify not only an honor to the flag or representative of a friendly nation, but also that the vessel had no hostile intent. Shotted guns fired by the full armament of the ship were used in the seventeenth century, as it is to say: "Now every gun is empty and we are unarmed." Blank salutes became the eighteenth century fashion, but, like many other customs of that polished, formal period, were carried to a ridiculous extreme. When in due time it became the practice to give a special salute for a certain rank or occasion, the odd number of guns—in which all salutes are measured—was selected in order that the salute might open as well as close on the "honor" side of the ship, the vessel's starboard. When the United States first attained national standing, the existing national salute of twenty-one guns was naturally adopted in accordance with the usage of other countries, by our army and navy. So in international usage the national salute for every country is twenty-one guns; while the American national salute, used in our own country, is one for every State, forty-six guns now being fired on State occasions. The earliest instance of this domestic salute was that which history records as given at the raising of the first American flag, when Capt. John Paul Jones fired thirteen guns, one in honor of each of the thirteen original States.

The number of guns fired in an artillery salute varies in accordance with the rank of the officer or personage saluted. The President's salute is, of course, twenty-one guns. Admirals of the navy, generals of the army, governors of the States, ambassadors from foreign countries, and justices of the Supreme Court are saluted by a salvo of seventeen guns. Salutes gradually diminish in the number of guns fired until they reach the lowest grade, seven guns for a junior commanding officer or our consul at a foreign port.—St. Nicholas.

Fuel Oil for Warships.

WASHINGTON, November 15.—Intimation of the coming use of oil as a fuel for ships of the Navy is contained in the announcement that bids will be opened at the navy bureau of yards and docks December 4 for the construction at the Boston navy yard of a concrete oil tank storage house, fifty feet by seventy-five feet and twenty-four feet deep. Similar tanks are to be constructed at other yards on the Atlantic coast, and the supply ship Arctus, now at the Mare Island yard, is to be brought around to the Atlantic and go into service as an oil tank ship. A concrete sea wall nearly half a mile long, supported on round piles and sheet piling, will have to be constructed in front of the naval training station at North Chicago, in order to hold the shore line of Lake Michigan and protect the inner basin. Bids for this work will be opened at the navy bureau of yards and docks November 27. The same day bids will be opened for 12,000 square yards of macadam roadway and 6700 square yards of concrete walks at the naval training station.

Report on the Maxim Silencer.

The war department has received from the School of Musketry a comprehensive report of the findings made at that place to ascertain the adaptability of the Maxim silencer to the military service.

It was found that, when the silencer was employed, the sound of discharge decreased in volume so that the voice is permitted to be heard at the firing point above the sound of a number of rifles in action. It is thought that this will

greatly facilitate the control of the firing line and extend the influence of officers and non-commissioned officers in all the stages of fire action. Experiments were conducted at night to ascertain whether any reduction of flash is accomplished by the silencer, particularly with a number of guns firing, producing a number of flashes. Without the silencer the flash is dull colored, but plainly seen. With the silencer, about one shot in every thirty produces a flash of the same color as the normal flash. No indications were found that the flight of the bullet was in any way disturbed by the silencer.

In regard to the value of the silencer in reducing noise, the report states that the device may be a tactical disadvantage in situations where it is important that the firing of advanced bodies of troops be heard by troops in reserve.

The report sets out that the advantages of the silencer are: Reduction of recoil, muffling of the report at the firing point, the absence of visible flash while firing at night, and diminution of the sound of discharge as it will be heard by an enemy. The disadvantages arising from the use of the silencer are slight increase in visibility of products of discharge under certain weather conditions and the difficulty of handling when heated, and additional manipulation required when necessary to fix the bayonet.

It is stated that in principle there are no disadvantages which weigh seriously against the advantages set forth, but in its present form the silencer as adapted to the military rifle is not a serviceable device. The bayonet is an indispensable part of foot soldiers' armament, which comes into play in the acute stage of the infantry fight. The action of fixing the bayonet comes at a time corresponding to the period of maximum heat, when the silencer cannot be handled, and, even if this difficulty could be overcome through the use of some self-cooling material, the additional manipulation necessary to remove the silencer, occurring as it does at a stage when emotions are at their highest pitch, is a great disadvantage, which cannot be disregarded. In the excitement of such a period many silencers would be lost.

The report states that the advantages that have been set forth are too valuable to be rejected, although to make them available without detriment to other considerations of importance is merely a mechanical problem, which seems to present no insurmountable difficulties. The solution appears to be in making the silencer an integral part of the piece, to be detachable when necessary for cleaning, but normally a part of the assembled piece. It is recommended that the silencer in its present form be not adopted for use in the service, but that the inventor be invited and encouraged to continue his efforts to perfect the device along the line indicated.

Brownson's Views Remain Unchanged.

Rear Admiral Willard H. Brownson, U. S. N., retired, former chief of the bureau of navigation of the navy department, who in December, 1907, resigned that office after a controversy with President Roosevelt over the assignment of Surgeon Charles F. Stokes, U. S. N., to the command of the hospital ship Relief, left Washington last night for Thomasville, N.C., where he will spend a week hunting. When asked if he had anything to say about the recent decision of President Taft and Secretary of the Navy Meyer to assign Surgeon George Pickrell, U. S. N., to command the hospital ship Solace, he replied: "Nothing except that it is to be regretted that a matter of so much importance to the best interests of the service should not have been decided entirely on its merits."

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